



Interracial News Service

A DIGEST OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RELATIONS

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CHURCH BODIES SPEAK ON SEGREGATION IN EDUCATION

Virginia Council of Churches

It is our conviction that the Christian individual is morally obligated to consider racial problems in the spirit of Jesus Christ, and to bring to focus upon them the mind of Christ.

We hold that God is the father of all men, and that, having the same father, men are brothers one of another. Inasmuch as man comes from God, is created in the spiritual likeness of God, and at last returns unto God, we hold that, as an individual, he has dignity and worth which is in no way dependent upon the circumstances of his earthly existence. We minimize or ignore this fact at our own peril. We do not attempt to speak for the fifteen communions which compose our Council, but as the Executive Committee of the Virginia Council of Churches, we are deeply concerned about the rapidly approaching crisis over racial segregation particularly as that situation may be fundamentally affected by the forthcoming ruling of the Supreme Court of the United States on segregation in our public schools.

We recognize the tardiness of the Christian community in forthrightly dealing with this problem. We likewise recognize that our public schools are essential to the proper functioning of democracy, and are eager to see the state of Virginia maintain its public school system unimpaired. We are convinced, however, that no satisfactory solution to the so-called "segregation problem" is to be achieved outside the framework of Christian thought and teaching. No solution which even inferentially impugns the equal dignity and worth of human personality can be a final solution.

We emphasize to ourselves, and to our fellow Christians, the grave implications surrounding this problem of racial segregation. We urge prayerful and serious study of it in the spirit of boundless, courageous, intelligent goodwill — which is the spirit of Jesus Christ. When the Supreme Court of the United States shall have expressed itself on the matter, we call upon our brothers to receive its expression peacefully and in good faith. Patient perseverance in pursuit of ideal relationships in our time surely will have its reward.

(Statement adopted by Executive Committee in session Friday, January 8, 1954)

Presbyterian Church, U. S.

The case before the Supreme Court relative to segregation in the public schools involves moral issues which every American citizen must confront. Surely Christian people should be acquainted with these issues and be prepared to give guidance in these momentous days. . . . Quite obviously the influence of Christian people will have an important bearing upon the way in which our people adjust themselves to the claims of representative government. . . . Regardless of the decision of the Supreme Court, Christian people will have to be acquainted with the moral and spiritual issues which are at stake. What are these issues?

. . . there is the issue of *human rights*. Not only does Scripture teach the dignity and worth of every person, but also the . . . (Declaration of Independence) recognizes that . . . (men are) "endowed . . . with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." The question then becomes: "Does the practice of segregation in the public schools promote or hinder the full enjoyment of these rights?" . . . To answer the question intelligently one must be familiar with conditions as they have existed and now exist in a segregated school system. Likewise, one should know the psychological effects resulting from segregation. As Christian citizens we are morally bound to give serious and thoughtful study to these matters. . . .

A second issue is concerned with the *expenditure of money*. Is it morally justifiable to maintain two separate school systems, involving a vast outlay of money, when this extra expenditure could be used in better equipping a single system? . . . This is a serious question to which answer must be given, and that answer must be based upon fact.

A third issue comes nearer home to the Christian believer, for it is concerned with the practice of the *law of neighborliness*. Jesus pointed out that the teaching of the law and the prophets was summed up in the two commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Matt. 22:37-39) The law of neighborliness under the Old Covenant applied to the material and spiritual needs of all

members of the nation alike. The prosperous and strong were to provide for the needs of the poor and the weak. Under the New Covenant this law continued to be observed, except that Christian believers had the example of Jesus to guide them in the understanding of this law. Said Jesus: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:34-35) . . .

It will not be possible to understand the application of the law, especially with reference to the matter of segregation, without the spirit of compassion so evident in the life of Jesus. The Golden Rule will be of help in trying to discover the attitude and course for Christians to take . . .

A fourth issue has to do with the *influence* which the policy and practice of our people has *upon the rest of the world*. . . . In the minds of Eastern peoples Christianity is identified with the West. If America holds to the practice of segregation, Christianity will be identified with such action. Therefore, this is a time for Christian citizens to give serious consideration to the whole matter of segregation. Is such a practice compatible with the light and love of Jesus Christ? Does it constitute a hindrance to the coming of the Kingdom of God upon earth?

In a real sense, then, the Church is on trial during these days of national decision. How great is the Church? How great is the Presbyterian Church in the United States? Known as a denomination which has championed the cause of human freedom, because God is sovereign of all, we as Presbyterians are being tested at this time. God help us to measure up to His demands upon us!

(A Moral Issue, published by the Division of Christian Relations, Board of Church Extension and Board of Women's Work, Presbyterian Church in the United States)

Texas Council of Churches

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We recognize that whatever decision the Supreme Court may render regarding race segregation in our public schools, the Christians of every Texas community have a responsibility to lead their respective

communities in the development of plans and policies which will insure to every person his fullest rights and opportunities as an American and as a child of God.

(From the *Report of the Resolutions Committee*, Texas Council of Churches)

United Church Women

United Church Women in assembly at Atlantic City, October 5-8, 1953, go on record as favoring the ending of segregation in public schools.

The decision of the U. S. Supreme Court, relative to segregated schools in this nation is now pending. Whatever this decision may be, Christian women face the immediate urgency of finding ways to meet the impact of the decision on their community patterns and practices. It is recommended that state and local councils acquaint themselves and their communities with the decision and help all groups concerned to understand its implications and to make the adjustments that may be necessary. (*The Church Women*, November, 1953)

UCYM

The 1953 General Council of the United Christian Youth Movement adopted the Christian Citizenship Commission Report which included the following resolution:

WHEREAS the population of the United States of America is composed of various racial and cultural groups, and

WHEREAS the unique character and strength of our nation have been derived from and depend upon the diversified contributions of these groups, and WHEREAS the equality of educational opportunities is a basic human right, and

WHEREAS the basic tenets of Christianity teach brotherhood and equality, be it therefore

RESOLVED that the UCYM go on record in favor of non-segregated public schools and institutions of higher learning. It is further resolved that we support and encourage any action of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government which would enable the full realization of this basic right. (*The Minutes*, UCYM General Council, 1953)

N C C Policy

The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. in its organizational structure and operation, renounces and earnestly recommends to its member churches that they renounce the pattern of segregation based on race, color or national origin as unnecessary and undesirable and a violation of the Gospel of love and human brotherhood. While

recognizing that historical and social factors make it more difficult for some churches than for others to realize the Christian ideal of non-segregation, the Council urges all of its constituent members to work steadily and progressively towards a non-segregated church as the goal which is set forth in the faith and practice of the early Christian community and inherent in the New Testament idea of the Church of Christ. As proof of our sincerity in this renunciation, the National Council of Churches will work for a non-segregated church and a *non-segregated community*. (Emphasis added)

(*The Churches and Segregation*, adopted by the General Board of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., June 11, 1952)

In the Meantime

The Topeka board of education is not waiting for the U. S. Supreme Court to outlaw segregation. It is going ahead with its program for the gradual elimination of separate schools.

Last fall, the Topeka school board began this program by opening two previously "all-white" schools, Randolph and Southwest, to Negro pupils. Ten Negro children have been attending these two schools since September.

The second step toward integration was taken . . . when the Topeka school board voted to end segregation in 12 more elementary schools beginning in September of 1954.

The four schools operated as Negro schools will continue to operate next year, the board said, but 113 of the Negro children attending them will be transferred to the 12 schools now attended exclusively by whites. . . .

The schools which will become integrated are located in sections of Topeka where Negro families now live. The colored children now are sent to one of the four Negro schools with the school board paying the transportation. Beginning next year, the board will no longer pay the transportation to the Negro schools but parents may continue to send their children to the Negro schools if they desire.

With the change at the 12 schools next fall, that will leave only five Topeka schools exclusively for white pupils. . . .

The citizens of Topeka and the state of Kansas plan to fight for the integration of Negro teachers into the public school system as well as the pupils. (*Kansas City Call*, February 29)

The matter in these pages is presented for the reader's information. Unless so stated, it is not to be construed as reflecting the attitudes or positions of the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations or of The National Council of Churches.

HOUSING

Seven Month's War

In a five-room apartment in Chicago's Trumbull Park Homes, a public housing project, a grey-haired police captain sat one night last week with two lieutenants, a squad of sergeants and a radio operator, taking walkie-talkie calls from patrolmen stationed for blocks around. The radio crackled: "Post No. 3 reporting, 9:30 P.M. All is peaceful." This reassuring word came from the street outside 10630 South Bensley, where six cops sat in a tin shack, a hole in its roof covered by an old dishpan, warming themselves at a portable stove and ignoring the shrill profanity of a gang of teen-agers across the street. . . .

No light came from the windows of an apartment at 10630 South Bensley; none has for months. But there were people there. Behind the plywood barrier set up to protect them from bricks and stones were Donald Howard, his wife and their two small children. . . . So they have been living for many weeks. The Howards are Negroes, the first of their race to become tenants in Trumbull Park.

The Howards' first few days in Trumbull were without incident. Then, one Wednesday night as 25-year-old Don Howard sat with his son and daughter in the living room, a paving block crashed through the front window. That was the beginning. In the following weeks, more windows were smashed; sulphur stink bombs were hurled into the apartment; effigies of Negroes blazed on street corners; two neighborhood stores which sold to Negro customers were set afire; scores of fires have been set on the property of whites who refused to join the campaign to force the Negroes out; ten ugly crowds of up to 1,000 people were dispersed by police. As many as 1,000 cops have been on around-the-clock duty in the Trumbull Park area ever since.

. . . Five other Negro families have since moved into the development, but the Howards bear the brunt of mob hatred. Whenever Don Howard leaves the apartment house, he gets into a paddy wagon and, with a police escort, is taken to a safe area to board his bus. The route is changed every day. But violence continues. . . .

Early last week, about 500 men, women and children, some of them armed with bricks and clubs, gathered near the Howard apartment. In the ensuing riot, four policemen and a six-year-old boy were injured. The police staunchly continue to protect the Negroes, although the huge details assigned to Trumbull Park mean that other areas of the city are going without adequate police protection. No real effort is made to punish rioters. Police make few arrests because, they say, magistrates (only two persons were charged with disorderly conduct in last week's riot) afraid of political reprisals will not take a firm line against the white demonstrators. . . . (*Time Magazine*, March 1)

Chicago Commission Appointed

A special commission appointed by Mayor Martin H. Kennelly (of Chicago) has recommended a six-point program to ease racial tension in public housing projects. . . .

(Some of the) recommendations suggested by the commission were as follows:

Before Negro families are moved into all-white projects, a program of information and education reaching every resident in the community should be carried out. Schools and churches should be enlisted in this program. . . .

The City Council should adopt a resolution placing the city on record against racial discrimination in public buildings. . . .

Public housing projects must be integrated; that is, made available to any eligible tenant regardless of race, creed or color. . . . (*New York Times*, February 7)

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Dual Practices in San Francisco

On January 5, 1954, the Executive Director of the San Francisco Housing Authority, John W. Beard, announced that the Authority will include an anti-segregation clause in its agreement to operate four temporary war housing projects which it is now negotiating to take over from the Federal government. The projects, which include 3,500 apartments, are currently operated on a segregated basis. . . .

The new racial integration policy will cover only the four temporary war housing projects which the City of San Francisco and the Housing Authority are making arrangements to take over from the Federal Government. This decision to have integrated occupancy in the four temporary projects when they come under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Housing Authority does not reverse the Authority's policy of enforced segregation in its permanent low-rent housing projects. The policy of the Housing Authority with respect to segregation in those projects has been declared unconstitutional by the California Supreme Court . . . , but the San Francisco Housing Authority has announced its decision to appeal the California court's ruling to the U. S. Supreme Court. (*Joint Memorandum, American Jewish Committee and Anti-Defamation League*, January 18)

RACE RELATIONS SUNDAY

Thirty-one years have passed since the observance of the first Race Relations Sunday. At present, very few of the persons who participated in establishing the observance are actively connected with the work of the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations of the National Council of Churches, which sponsors it. Since Race Relations Sunday has been observed for more than a generation, it is valuable at the time of the thirty-second annual observance to take stock. What

was the original purpose of the observance? Has it changed? Has the observance grown? What is the nature of this growth? . . .

This first observance was conceived of as a day when Christians, Negro and white, could come together to discuss and think about the application of the Christian ideal of brotherhood in race relations. This observance met the need for establishing channels of communication between Negroes and white people which were infrequent in those days. . . .

Today there are many established channels of communication between Negroes and white people so that it is no longer necessary to emphasize a particular Sunday for this purpose. However, with the passing of the years the purpose has gradually changed. By 1926 the first change was apparent in the publication of materials which presented the problems of the American Indians, Mexicans in the United States, Orientals as well as Negroes.

In 1930 the Federal Council of Churches decided to issue a Race Relations Sunday Message. . . . the message, which is grounded in the fundamental beliefs of the Christian faith, has spoken both to church people and to the nation about the basic concerns of justice and full opportunity to participate in every aspect of community life for all people without regard to race, color or national origin. . . .

Race Relations Sunday has become firmly established in the calendars of many churches. This has been due to the excellent cooperation of the communions that were constituent to the Federal Council of Churches and are now members of the National Council of Churches. The first observance was launched in 1923 only after the home missions societies of the various denominations had expressed interest in it. The interest and cooperation of the home missions societies have continued and to them has been added the cooperation of denominational social action departments, boards of Christian education, denominational women's societies, state and local councils of churches, local churches and many local church organizations.

Another insight into the growth of the observance is found in the distribution of literature. In 1932 it was reported that 10,000 pieces of literature were distributed . . . In 1953, 167,000 pieces were distributed. . . .

The increasing attention given the observance by newspapers, church publications, television and radio is another sign of its growth. . . .

Who can measure the influence of an idea? Race Relations Sunday is an idea which served a purpose: the purpose of establishing channels of communication between people of different races. In the process of serving this purpose until it was no longer a need, another important purpose was discovered. Now Race Relations Sunday has become the vehicle by

which the churches emphasize the need to build a continuous program of education and action for the improvement of race relations.

("Race Relations Sunday — Then and Now" by J. Oscar Lee, *International Journal of Religious Education*, February, 1954)

AGAINST THE TIDE

Observers (in Cape Town, South Africa) see the survival of free trade unionism as the issue at stake in the government's new legislative bill (Industrial Conciliation Bill) which would introduce apartheid (racial segregation) into South Africa's labor unions. . . .

The introduction of trade union apartheid, the prohibiting of unions from affiliating with political parties, and further restrictions on the workers' right to strike are among the far-reaching provisions of the bill which promises to be one of the most tendentious pieces of legislation introduced in the South African House of Assembly since the Nationalists came into power in 1948 on the strength of their apartheid-for-all program.

The Minister's (of Labor) long threatened introduction of apartheid into the trade union movement is contained in a subsection of the bill which specifies that "if membership of a registered trade union or employers' organization is open to persons of more than one race, the constitution of such union or organization shall provide for the establishment of separate branches according to race; that separate meetings shall be held for separate branches; and that the members of any executive or similar committee of the union or organization, shall be white persons."

This means, for example, that Colored (half-caste) branches can be represented on executive committees of a mixed union only by white persons — even if the union contains 2,000 Colored workers and only 10 white workers. . . .

The bill also gives the Minister of Labor power to declare any industry "essential". Strike action then becomes illegal. And it gives the Minister power to state what race will perform work of a particular nature. . . . (*Christian Science Monitor*, February 23)

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Hendrik F. Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs, presented a bill in Parliament . . . empowering him to make Negroes homeless without providing any alternative accommodation or means of livelihood.

The bill will become law as do all regular Government bills since they are passed first by a caucus of the Nationalist majority party.

The new law will be an amendment to the Native Land and Trust Act, applicable at the discretion of the Minister to more

than one-third of the total Negro population of South Africa that is working on or just living on white-owned farms.

On land where natives are found in excess of the number permitted to the farmer, they can now be ordered under the Ministry's authority to get out and wherever they attempt to settle down they can be ordered out again. . . .

Previous efforts had been blocked by a provision of the law that the Ministry when driving out the native had to provide alternative accommodations and land or something in the way of a place to live and to earn a living. This provision will now be lifted.

The Minister said today that he could provide work through the Native Labor Bureaus. The Opposition contends that this amounts to forced labor as the Negro, with the police driving him on with no chance to settle down, would have to go where the Native Labor Bureau chose to send him and accept the earnings offered.

If work is not available on this basis, the Negro will eventually be driven back into the native reserves where all land is taken and there is no way of earning a living. It is said the situation may become similar to that in the crowded Kikuyu reserve in Kenya after the outbreak of the Mau Mau rebellion, when squatters and squatter tenants and many laborers were driven off the white-owned land and forced into the Kikuyu reserve to become a festering mass of discontented and disinherited. (*New York Times*, February 23)

Thirty years of academic freedom are seen to be at stake (in Cape Town, South Africa) in the government's plans to introduce apartheid—racial segregation—into two of South Africa's most important universities.

Union-wide protests have resulted from Prime Minister Daniel F. Malan's recent speech indicating that such plans were under way for the universities of Witwatersrand and Cape Town. . . .

Non-segregation has been practiced at these two important universities for more than 30 years. It has been testified by the authorities, the staff, and the students of both universities that during this whole period there has been little friction between students of different races, and that the good order and good working of both institutions have not been adversely affected by a multi-racial program.

According to objectors to the non-segregation policy, academic non-segregation inevitably leads to unrestricted social mixing. But university authorities say this has not happened during the many years of interracial contact at either Witwatersrand or Cape Town, and is not likely to start now. . . .

Another argument raised in support of segregation is that non-segregation is contrary to the wishes of the South African public. Observers point out if this were

really so, it would be difficult to understand how non-segregation could have survived for more than 30 years. Moreover, throughout that time the public has supported the two non-segregated universities more than any others, both with donations and by sending their sons and daughters to them. The only demands that have ever been made for a change have come from politicians. . . . (*Christian Science Monitor*, February 19)

INDIANS IN THE U. S.

Death Stalks the Navajo

Four years ago next April the Federal Government entered upon a ten-year program to improve the condition of the Navajo and Hopi Indians. Former President Truman, signing the enabling act, called it "an important milestone in our Government's administration of Indian affairs."

(Recently) the House Appropriation Committee released testimony, given last month in secret hearings, that the average length of life of a Navajo was 20 years; and that the Navajo death rate from tuberculosis was 9.3 times that among the whites, from dysentery 13 times, from measles 29.5 times, from gastroenteritis 25 times. A Government doctor admitted that "we do not have a health education program." Patients discharged from hospitals went back to the mode of living that had caused their diseases. They drank polluted water, lived in unsanitary homes. No doubt this showed bad judgment on the part of the Indians themselves. But an average Navajo on tribal lands today hasn't money enough to indulge in good judgment as to where and how he shall live.

Under the present administration the United States is committed to a gradual withdrawal of Federal control over the tribes. But just now it is clear that a negative policy will not suffice. Even though the Navajos are said to be increasing at the rate of 2 per cent a year, and even though the general Indian population is on the rise, the situation described

in this recent testimony is disgraceful. It is Washington's responsibility, through education, better health services and broadened opportunities, to do something about it. (Editorial, *New York Times*, March 1).

Assimilation Sought

Indians of New York are looking more and more beyond the confines of their reservations for opportunity as citizens of the state.

The various tribes, who once fiercely cherished their independence, are seeking social, economic and cultural assimilation.

A report of the Joint Legislative Committee on Indian Affairs, . . . reveals that Indians are resentful of the state's practice of maintaining special schools on the reservations for their children. They want their offspring to attend regular public schools. . . .

The report spotlighted a petition by 250 parents of 474 Seneca children attending the Thomas Indian School on the Cattaraugus reservation. The Senecas sought to have their children attend public schools. . . .

The report said the last ten years had seen changes in relations between Indians and the state that were inconceivable in the light of previous experience.

"These changes," the summary read, "have brought security and stability to reservation existence and desire on the part of an ever increasing number of Indians to assume more active roles in contemporary society.

"Indian maturity and intelligence call for increasing emphasis upon measures conducive to the forward trend now under way." (*New York Times*, March 5).

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